

THE DAY BOOK

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21, 1914, at the postoffice at Chicago,
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WHAT IT ALL MEANS.—If you want to get the real meaning of this telephone scrap, bear these facts in mind:

A bunch of wise guys wanted a franchise that would give them the right to build a system of freight tunnels under the business section of Chicago.

They didn't want council or the public to know what they were after. So they called themselves the Illinois Telephone & Telegraph Co. and made application for a phone franchise, which gave them the right to build conduits under the streets. And they started in to build conduits big enough for cars.

Then they got their franchise amended for tunnels.

In order to get their first franchise they led the people to believe they would give phone competition and some relief from rotten service. To protect the city, council provided that if they didn't get 20,000 bonafide subscribers by a certain date, or sold out or agreed to sell out to another phone company (meaning, of course, the Bell), their franchise and plant would be forfeited to the city.

They got their tunnel, and didn't get their 20,000 bonafide subscribers, although they had a better phone than the one used by the trust.

Then they agreed to sell to the trust for \$5,300,000, which would let them out of the telephone business

and still give them what they really wanted in the first place—a freight tunnel system.

Now they want the city to waive its rights and not insist on forfeiture of phone franchise and plant, even if they did live up to their agreement.

Not only that, but they want council to give permission for them to sell out and gather in that \$5,300,000, although they know the subscribers of the phone trust will have to pay the \$5,300,000 in increased rates; because the trust will have the right to add the \$5,300,000 to its capitalization and charge rates that will pay interest on that money.

So what these promoters are asking is that council consent to making Chicago telephone users pay \$5,300,000 for a telephone plant that will be thrown on the junkpile as soon as it is bought.

The trust makes no pretense that it will operate the Automatic plant. It doesn't deny that the plant will go to the junkpile as soon as it is bought.

So, if the deal goes through, nobody gets anything but the tunnel company and the phone trust. The tunnel company gets \$5,300,000 and the phone trust gets a possible competitor out of the way and an absolute phone monopoly in Chicago.

Can YOU see any reason on earth why any alderman should vote to permit the sale, or refuse to vote to start forfeiture proceedings, UNLESS THERE IS SOMETHING IN IT FOR THAT ALDERMAN?

Why not take over the Automatic plant and build it up as a Chicago phone system, owned and operated by the people for their own benefit, with a good chance to bring excellent phone service down to a cent a call and a phone in every home?

SHORT ONES

The canteloupe trust is to be tried this fall—and we warn everyone con-